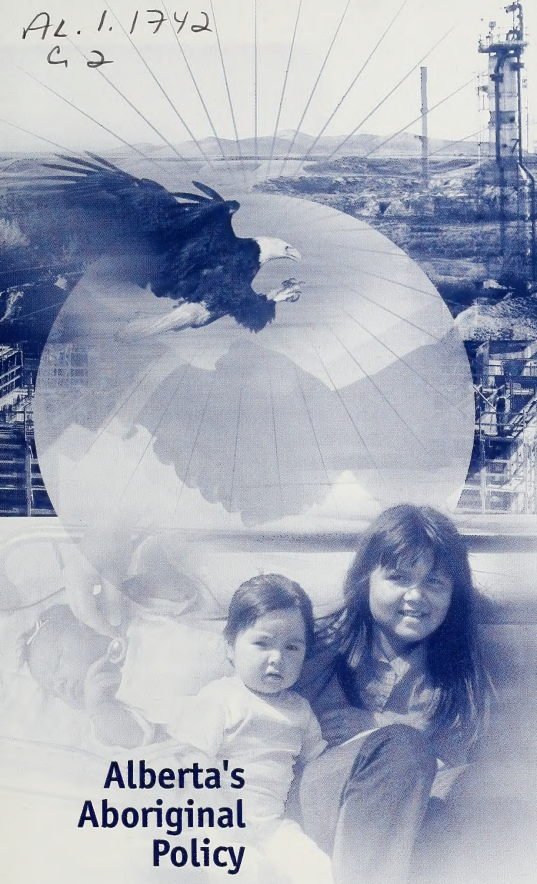
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Alberta's Aboriginal Policy

STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

A Cross-Ministry Initiative

Report to Albertans

2000-2001 2001-2002

Alberta
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

Strengthening Relationships

A Cross-Ministry Initiative

In 2000, the Government of Alberta approved the
The Aboriginal Policy Initiative (API) is one of th

Recognizing that a collaborative approach will be
as a cross-ministry initiative during 2001-2002.

In its first year, the API focused on establishme
including cross-ministry strategies and measures.

In its second year, the API focused on four key

- Improve the health status and well-being of A
- Improve educational attainment and cultural a
- Increase the participation by Aboriginal peopl
- Clarify federal/provincial/Aboriginal roles and

Progress toward these objectives is summarized i





riginal Policy Framework (APF).
ys in which the government implements the *APF.*

ddress Aboriginal issues, the API continued

an internal implementation process,

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s *Report to Albertans.*

Objective 1:
Improve the health status and well-being of Aboriginal people.

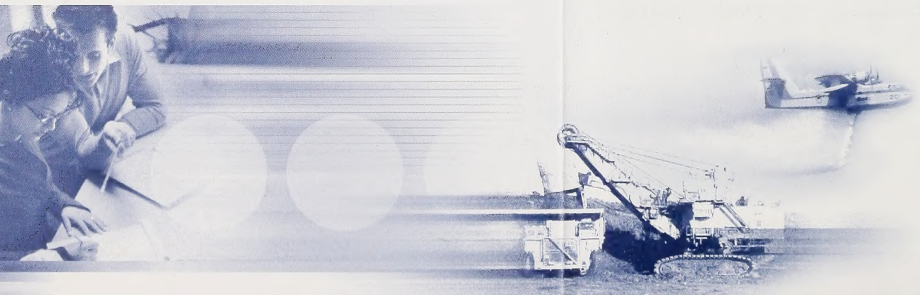
Accomplishments

- 17 new **community-based health projects** initiated under the Aboriginal Health Strategy Project fund.
- Mobile **diabetes screening clinics** established in First Nations communities.
- Provincewide **Aboriginal Youth Forum** held in 2000 and **National Aboriginal Youth Forum** held in 2001.
- **Permanency planning initiatives** to increase numbers of Aboriginal children in government care being returned to parental or community care.
- Pilot projects to unite First Nations children under government care with permanent First Nations adoptive parents. The **Yellowhead Tribal Council Open Custom Adoptions pilot project** was the first of its kind in Canada. Other pilot projects are currently underway.
- 13 per cent increase in the number and value of **Aboriginal Health Careers Bursaries:** 53 recipients in 2001.
- Development and implementation of **disaster preparedness training** for First Nations.
- Support provided for 60 **community justice projects** in 48 Aboriginal communities.

Objective 2:
Improve educational attainment and cultural appreciation.

Accomplishments

- Completion of the Native Education Policy Review and development of the ***First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.***
- Development of new high school **Aboriginal studies** and **Aboriginal languages** curricula.
- **Amiskwaciy Academy,** a new high school in Edmonton, to provide a learning environment that supports Aboriginal cultures and traditions. (A joint initiative with Edmonton Public School Board).
- Passing of the ***First Nations Sacred Ceremonial Objects Repatriation Act,*** the first legislation of its kind in Canada to enable repatriation of sacred ceremonial objects to First Nations communities of origin.
- **Rainbow Spirit Project,** a joint initiative of Edmonton Catholic School Board and Alberta Learning, to identify and implement best practices to meet the needs of Aboriginal learners in an integrated setting.
- Removal of human remains from the **Dunbow cemetery** and re-interment at St. Joseph's Industrial School Provincial Historic Site.
- Launch of the **Tsuu T'ina Court and Peacemaker Program.** This first comprehensive Aboriginal court in Canada blends Aboriginal justice traditions with the Provincial Court of Alberta.



Objective 3:
Increase the participation by Aboriginal people in the Alberta economy.

Accomplishments

- Support and encouragement of **Aboriginal private-sector partnerships.** There are more than 50 such partnerships in Alberta in conventional and leading-edge technology, oil and gas and renewable energy, and employment and training ventures.

- Development of contracting procedures for construction on First Nations reserves and Metis Settlements. In 2001, **contracts for transportation and civil projects** valued at $42.7 million included clauses for Aboriginal participation.

- Implementation of the **Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project.** This joint initiative between industry and the Aboriginal community, supported by Alberta Learning, is intended to increase Aboriginal participation in apprenticeship programs.

- Natural resource industry **training projects,** involving Aboriginal communities, government and private-sector partners, have prepared over 100 Aboriginal Albertans for employment in the oil and gas industry.

- Integration of regional Aboriginal interests into **sustainable resource development** through the Foothills Model Forest and the Northern East Slopes Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy.

- Approval of **First Nations Gaming Policy** to provide guidelines for developing on-reserve casinos within Alberta's regulatory framework.

- Federal, provincial and territorial Ministers and national Aboriginal Leaders endorsed a national framework for ***Strengthening Aboriginal Participation in the Economy.***

- In partnership with Statistics Canada, development and implementation of a pilot project to collect **Aboriginal-specific Labour Force Survey data** for Alberta.

Objective 4:
Clarify federal/provincial/Aboriginal roles and responsibilities.

Accomplishments

- Establishment of the **Alberta/Canada Partnership Forum,** which includes participation from Alberta First Nations and Metis organizations, to develop practical approaches to increasing Aboriginal participation in the economy.

- Establishment of a working group to facilitate and support Aboriginal communities in achieving maximum benefits from **SuperNet.**

- Participation with the federal government and others in Calgary and Edmonton **urban Aboriginal partnerships,** which are intended to provide coordinated responses to Aboriginal issues in Alberta's largest cities.

- Negotiation of a **final agreement regarding** Alberta's participation in the **Cold Lake** (Primrose Lake) **specific claim.**

- Completion of a **Protocol Agreement** between the Government of Alberta and the Siksika Nation, under which both parties have agreed to negotiate on issues of mutual interest.

Background

In September 2000, the Government of Alberta released *Strengthening Relationships, The Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Policy Framework.*

- The *APF* was developed with input from all Government of Alberta ministries.
- Input was obtained from Aboriginal leaders and people, as well as representatives from industry and other interested Albertans.
- The *APF* is a Government of Alberta policy statement. It sets out the basic structure for existing and new Government of Alberta policies to address First Nations and Metis issues in Alberta.
- The *APF* is not an agreement with Aboriginal people. It neither abrogates nor derogates from existing treaty and Aboriginal rights.

Approval of the *APF* was a primary objective during the first year of the Aboriginal Policy Initiative.

The Government of Alberta's Business Plan identifies Aboriginal issues in Goal 6, which states:

"The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people will be comparable to that of other Albertans."

Ten-year measures have been identified to track progress in the areas of life expectancy, educational attainment and employment.

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